

MINUTES
BROWN COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
Monday, May 18th , 2020, 3:30 p.m.
Meeting Held Through Cisco WebEx

ROLL CALL:

Tom Diedrick-Vice Chair	<u>X</u>	Ann Hartman	<u>Abs</u>
John Fenner	<u>X</u>	Sup. Megan Borchardt	<u>X</u>
Corday Goddard-Chair	<u>X</u>		

OTHERS PRESENT: Patrick Leifker, David Diedrick, Sup. Cassandra Erickson, Matt Roberts and Kathy Meyer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approval of the minutes from the April 13th, 2020 meeting of the Brown County Housing Authority.

A motion was made by J. Fenner, seconded by M. Borchardt to approve the minutes from the April 13th, 2020 meeting of the Brown County Housing Authority. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

2. Appointment of Thomas Diedrick to the Brown County Housing Authority for a five-year term, expiring April 30, 2025.
3. Appointment of Megan Borchardt to the Brown County Housing Authority for a five-year term, expiring April 30, 2025.

A motion was made by T. Diedrick, seconded by J. Fenner to receive and place on file the appointments of T. Diedrick and M. Borchardt to the Brown County Housing Authority for a five-year term. Motion carried.

Meeting turned over to P. Leifker to conduct the election of the Chair and/or Vice-Chair of the Brown County Housing Authority.

P. Leifker stated that the Housing Authority Bylaws state that at our annual meeting every other year, we need to conduct the election of the officers. Currently Corday Goddard is the Chair, and Thomas Diedrick is the Vice-Chair. The terms are 2-year terms, and historically, the Housing Authority has rotated these positions to ensure everyone had an opportunity to serve. However, P. Leifker recommends having a conversation as to who may be interested in serving as an officer and then proceed with the election. Additionally, P. Leifker stated that there are no restrictions within the bylaws prohibiting that a person cannot serve in the same role in consecutive terms.

P. Leifker asked if there was anyone interested in serving in the Chair position for the Brown County Housing Authority? C. Goddard stated he is willing to stay on as Chair. J. Fenner was supportive of C. Goddard continuing as Chair of the Board for another term. M. Borchardt and T. Diedrick stated they were also supportive of C. Goddard serving a second term.

A motion was made by J. Fenner, seconded by M. Borchardt to appoint C. Goddard to continue serving as Chair of the Brown County Housing Authority. Motion carried.

P. Leifker asked if there was anyone interested in serving in the Vice-Chair position of the Brown County Housing Authority? T. Diedrick stated he is willing to stay on as Vice-Chair. J. Fenner and M. Borchardt stated they were supportive of T. Diedrick continuing as Vice-Chair of the Board for another term.

A motion was made by M. Borchardt, seconded by J. Fenner to appoint T. Diedrick to continue as Vice-Chair of the Brown County Housing Authority. Motion carried.

Meeting turned over to C. Goddard to conduct the reminder of the meeting.

REPORTS:

4. Report on Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance Program:

A. Preliminary Applications

There were 170 preliminary applications for April.

B. Unit Count

The unit count for April was 2,964.

C. Housing Assistance Payments Expenses

The April HAP expense totaled \$1,454,758.

D. Program Activity/52681B (administrative costs, portability activity, SEMAP)

For the month of March (April is not closed out) there were 293 port outs with an associated HAP expense of \$297,019, ICS was underspent by \$9,513.36 and the FSS underspent by \$1,783.69.

E. Family Self-Sufficiency Program (client count, participation levels, new contracts, graduates, escrow accounts, and homeownership)

In April there were 81 active FSS clients, 57 clients in level one; 16 clients in level two; 5 clients in level three and 3 clients in level four. There were 0 new contracts signed, 0 graduate, 45 active escrow accounts and 40 active homeowners.

F. VASH Reports (new VASH and active VASH)

For April there were 2 new VASH clients, for a total of 33 active VASH clients.

A motion was made by T. Diederick, seconded by J. Fenner to receive and place on file. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: No business.

NEW BUSINESS:

5. Update on Waivers adopted by the Brown County Housing Authority in response to PIH Notice 2020-05.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, HUD has issued some waivers that housing authorities are allowed to utilize within their program. The Brown County Housing Authority in combination with ICS, have adopted some of these waivers that are allowable with HUD.

P. Leifker reviewed these waivers, referring to the memo included in the agenda packet titled *Brown County Housing Authority (BCHA) Response to PIH Notice 2020-05*.

Public Housing and HCV Program

- PH and HCV - 3: Family Income and Composition: Annual Examination - Verification Requirements.
- PH and HCV – 4: Family Income and Composition: Interim Examinations.

P. Leifker stated that these two waivers allow the Housing Authority to utilize tenant declaration or self-certification as the highest form of income verification to process annual reexaminations. This reduces the burden that falls on the participants to try to get documentation from their employer/financial institution; this is temporarily postponed as a result of the pandemic. These waivers benefit the client as well as ICS staff.

P. Leifker reviewed another waiver under the Public Housing and HCV Program that the Brown County Housing Authority adopted.

- PH and HCV – 6: Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Contract of Participation: Contract Extension.

P. Leifker stated that this waiver allows for anyone who is in their final year of their contract year for the family self sufficiency program to get a one-year extension as a result of the pandemic.

P. Leifker stated that the most impact of the waivers for our housing authority is in terms of the **Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspections**. In the monthly reports there were reports that were omitted, one of which was the HQS report. ICS hasn't conducted an inspection since the middle of March so there was no data to report on. These waivers allow us to do utilize a landlord certification to proceed with new unit inspections and remedy any inspections that previously deemed having failed.

P. Leifker indicated that prior to the waivers being implemented by HUD, there was a great deal of concern throughout the community regarding the lack of inspections that were being conducted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the delay in receiving guidance from HUD regarding this, there was a brief time that ICS/BCHA were not able to issue payments due to an inspection not being completed; but this waiver helps to remedy those issues.

P. Leifker stated another important waiver that the housing authority has adopted:
Housing Choice Voucher Program Waivers

- HCV – 3: Term of Voucher – Extensions of Term:
Brown County Housing Authority is honoring all vouchers that are currently on the street. Basically, anyone who has started the process with ICS prior to COVID-19, we are still allowing their voucher to go through regardless of when they received their voucher.

P. Leifker stated that the dates in red in the memo are dates that HUD has identified that the waiver is good until. Dates will continue to be reviewed and P. Leifker stated that he will provide further guidance in updated memo's for ICS and the community as well.

P. Leifker will send all board members a copy of the memo that was included in today's meeting packet. P. Leifker indicated that there is an abbreviated version of this memo on ICS's website that identifies what waivers have been adopted but does not include the details behind it.

A motion was made by M. Borchardt, seconded by J. Fenner to receive and place on file the update on waivers adopted by the Brown County Housing Authority in response to PIH Notice 2020-05. Motion carried.

6. Update from BCHA Staff regarding current status with COVID-19.

P. Leifker stated that as of today, the Brown County Housing Authority office is closed to the public, however; staff are available via phone and email. The ICS office is open Monday – Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., adhering to social distancing with both staff and with the general public. Appointments are virtual or through telecommunications, and no physical inspections are being conducted, utilizing HUD's provided temporary waiver process of owner certification.

P. Leifker provided status updates on:

Lease Up – P. Leifker and ICS staff have had conversations with HUD and have evaluated our current funding situation and the tool HUD utilizes. As of right now, we have suspended on-going lease ups. We are still honoring the vouchers on the street, but we are not actively issuing any other vouchers.

Admin Fee Funding – We recently received notice that as part of the Cares Act, HUD is providing Housing Authorities with additional administrative fee funds that can be used for COVID-19 related expenses. Examples include normal day-to-day expenses, normal program administration and any specific coronavirus related expense (purchase of protective equipment, cleaning supplies, cleaning of properties, landlord incentive). HUD has provided some guidance as to what some of the allowable expenses would be, but they have not provided us with guidance on how those expenses would be tracked and what reporting needs to be done. Currently BCHA staff and ICS staff are looking at how we can utilize these funds. These funds are different than our normal admin fee funds, because COVID-19 funds are use-it or lose-it, so if we don't use these funds by the end of the year, it will have to be returned to HUD. P. Leifker will keep the board up-to-date on the use of these funds.

A motion was made by T. Diederick, seconded by M. Borchardt to receive and place on file the update from BCHA staff regarding current status with COVID-19. Motion carried.

7. Consideration with possible action on Approval of the Passbook Savings Rate, which determines asset calculations for housing assistance payments.

P. Leifker stated that federal regulations require us to verify that our passbook savings rate is in line with the average national savings rate. Currently our passbook savings rate is zero percent. P. Leifker's proposal is to have the savings rate remain at zero percent. In terms of program application, this passbook savings rate is only used to calculate the income earned off of an asset that the family has, so any assets that they have over \$5,000 would have this applicable interest rate apply to it. P. Leifker stated that over the last three years, we've been at the zero percent.

A motion was made by J. Fenner, seconded by M. Borchardt to approve the passbook savings rate to remain at zero percent. Motion carried.

BILLS AND FINANCIAL REPORT:

8. Consideration with possible action on acceptance of BCHA bills.

P. Leifker stated there are only two bills; one for Brown County for reimbursement of program administrative expenses and the other bill is for the Housing Authority Risk Protection Group, which is our insurance policy that is required. P. Leifker stated that our insurance policy had an increase of around 40% from last year's insurance premium. P. Leifker stated he had conversations with the insurance provider, the provider stated it was just an adjustment, and basically there was nothing he could do about it. P. Leifker stated due to the timing, he was not able to actively explore alternatives without running the risk of being uninsured. Discussion occurred.

A motion was made by T. Diederick, seconded by J. Fenner to accept and place on file the BCHA bills. Motion carried.

9. Consideration with possible action on acceptance of the BCHA Financial Report.

P. Leifker stated everything appears to be in-line for where we are in the course of the year, obviously the insurance expense is over budget, but everything else is tracking in-line with budget expense.

A motion was made by J. Fenner, seconded by M. Borchardt to accept and place on file the BCHA Financial Report. Motion carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT AND INFORMATIONAL:

10. Housing Administrator/Executive Director's Report.

P. Leifker provided an update on the Printery Row project that is being done in Pulaski. Housing Authority approved an eight project based vouchers for the 43 unit complex. The

environmental review has been completed, in the process of getting the AHAP Contract, which is the agreement to enter into a Housing Assistance Payment contract for those vouchers. This should be completed in approximately a month. They should be breaking ground July 1st.

A motion was made by T. Diedrick, seconded by M. Borchardt to accept and place on file the Housing Administrator/Executive Director's Report. Motion carried.

OTHER:

Supervisor Erickson introduced herself. Please include her in the agenda meeting packets.

Date of next meeting: June 15th, 2020 at 3:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.